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SUBJECT: CROATIAN PRESIDENT MESIC SPEAKING OUT ON THREATS
TO BOSNIAN UNITY

REF: EMBASSY SARAJEVO DAR 9/11/2007

Classified By: Ambassador Robert Bradtke, Reasons 1.4 B/D

¶1. (C) In separate conversations on September 12 and 13, Presidential Counselor Budimir Loncar and Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Tomislav Jakic discussed with us Croatian President Mesic's recent discussions with key Bosnian figures. Both said that Mesic had met with B-H Presidency Member Silajdzic the weekend of September 9 at Silajdzic's request. According to Loncar, Silajdzic requested the meeting on an "urgent" basis. Mesic did not want the appearance of a "secret" meeting, nor was he keen to meet officially with just one member of the Bosnian Presidency. As a result, the meeting took place on the margins of the Estonia-Croatia soccer match to which Mesic invited Silajdzic.

¶2. (C) Loncar said that Silajdzic made three main points to Mesic. He complained that the Bosnian Croats were "flirting" with Bosnian Serb leader Dodik on the third entity issue and urged Mesic to intervene with the Bosnian Croats; he accused the international community of not taking tough enough stances against Serbia and the Bosnian Serbs; and, he portrayed the United States as "too distracted" to deal with the problems of Bosnia. Loncar and Jakic confirmed press reports (REF) that Mesic had stated strongly that no one should be imperiling the unity of B-H, that proposals for a "third entity" were a very bad idea. Mesic he had called Presidency members Komsic and Radmanovic, and Loncar had called EUSR Lajcak to make this position clear. Jakic and Loncar also noted that Mesic would be traveling to Sarajevo on September 20 to receive an international humanitarian award, and that during that visit he would seek meetings with senior Bosnian officials and Lajcak to make the point in person.

¶3. (C) Jakic added that Mesic was "genuinely concerned" about the prospects for peace in B-H. It was still only the international military presence, Jakic argued, that kept the peace in Bosnia. Jakic added that the basic idea of Silajdzic's constitutional proposals to creative administrative regions to replace the entities was a good one, but in the Croats view was not possible except perhaps in the very long term. In this situation, Jakic concluded, the only option was to support EUSR Lajcak's efforts as "we must continue on the path of the current reforms." Jakic was absolutely clear that Mesic was "opposed to any sort of move toward a Croat entity." Loncar described the possibility of a third entity as a "disaster" for Bosnia. Queried as to whether there was significant elements of support within Croatia for a "Croat entity," Jakic downplayed the issue. While he acknowledged that there might be some in Croatia who would support such a thing, he did not believe they represented any significant faction or force.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: We believe Mesic, who built his political popularity and career on his break with Tudjman over

Croatia's 1990's policy toward Bosnia, is absolutely sincere in his support for Bosnia's integrity and Lajcak's efforts. We are also reassured to hear Jakic's estimation that there is no significant movement within Croatia to support a "third entity" option, a point which the Prime Minister has also stressed to the Ambassador and senior USG officials. END COMMENT.
BRADTKE